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## *House of Representatives*

### STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN ED CASE OF HAWAII WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2005

#### REAUTHORIZATION OF THE HAWAIIAN HOMELANDS OWNERSHIP ACT

Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce crucial legislation with my colleague from Hawaii, Congressman NEIL ABERCROMBIE, reauthorizing the Hawaiian Home Lands Homeownership Act of 2000. Our bill simply reauthorizes the program for FY 2006 through FY 2009.

Established in 2000 through Title VIII of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA), the Hawaiian Home Lands Homeownership Act provides affordable housing opportunities to Native Hawaiian families living on the Hawaiian Home Lands of Hawaii.

The Hawaiian Home Lands program, authorized by the federal government under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, is currently being administered by the State of Hawaii's Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. The Department receives over \$9 million annually from Title VIII of NAHASDA. The rest of its funds come from the State of Hawaii as well as revenues derived from its own assets and commercial activities.

Funds provided through the Hawaiian Home Lands Homeownership Act, which is the first significant infusion of federal housing for Native Hawaiians assistance since the Hawaiian Home Lands program began in 1921, have been well-utilized and administered through the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to service our under-served Native Hawaiian communities across the state. Funds have been used for:

Infrastructure construction of approximately 200 residential lots; Technical assistance for 110 families constructing their homes using the selfhelp method or with the assistance of Habitat for Humanity; Homeownership counseling for over 300 families; Assistance to community associations to construct or renovate community facilities; and Downpayment assistance and low interest loans to families.

As the housing needs of all of our Hawaii grow more and more critical, particularly given our small land base, any improvement to Native Hawaiian housing needs helps not only our Hawaiian community but all communities in our state.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate, where a companion bill was introduced by Senator Daniel Inouye, on passage of this important legislation. Mahalo!